

THE CITY OF ROCKVILLE PLANNING COMMISSION

ROCKVILLE'S PIKE PLAN

Meeting 08-2013

T R A N S C R I P T

O F

P R O C E E D I N G S

ROCKVILLE CITY HALL

Rockville, Maryland

April 24, 2013

BEFORE:

JERRY CALLISTEIN, Chairman

DON HADLEY, Commissioner

KATE OSTELL, Commissioner

DAVID HILL, Commissioner

DION TRAHAN, Commissioner

JACK LEIDERMAN, Commissioner

JOHN TYNER, Commissioner

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**ORIGINAL**

STAFF PRESENT

Andrew Gunning

Marcy Waxman

David Levy

Cindy Kebba

Deanne Mellander

Clark Larson

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P R O C E E D I N G S

CHAIRMAN: We will move on to Item No. 2, which is continuation of our public hearings on Rockville's Pike Plan, and the proposed revisions to the Rockville Pike District Zoning, zoning for the Zoning Ordinance. I hope everyone has seen the general rules that were posted out in the lobby. If anyone hasn't gotten a copy you may get one. If necessary, I will read them. Does anyone require, want me to read the rules? Okay.

We have, let's see, for the Rockville's Pike Plan Draft we have one, two, three, four, five people who have signed up, and then after those people have spoken we will give the opportunity to anyone else who has not signed up. So, without further ado I would like to call on Mr. Clark Reed, Chair of the Rockville Environment Commission. May we have five minutes on the clock, please?

MR. REED: All right. Thank you, and good evening. I live at 5913 Crawford Drive in Twinbrook Elementary, or the Twinbrook neighborhood. My son goes to Twinbrook Elementary School. I am speaking tonight on behalf of the Rockville Environment Commission, and on behalf of the Commission I appreciate the opportunity weigh in on the Rockville Pike Plan.

The Environment Commission was briefed by City Staff about the proposed plan, and unanimously approved the

1 following remarks at our meeting on April 4th. The  
2 Commission feels that the Rockville Pike Plan incorporates a  
3 number of environmentally sustainable elements that are  
4 consistent with Rockville's environmental protection laws,  
5 and with the priorities set by the Commission to reduce the  
6 City's environmental footprint. The proposed plan will help  
7 Rockville meet a high priority of reducing the City's  
8 greenhouse gas emissions, and its carbon footprint, while  
9 also improving local air quality. The plan for creating a  
10 walkable and bikeable stretch along the Pike that complies  
11 with the idea of complete streets and transit-oriented  
12 development has many benefits, including reducing the number  
13 of vehicle miles traveled by automobiles by estimates of 20  
14 to 40 percent, thereby also reducing local air pollution and  
15 carbon emissions; decreasing the amount of time that cars  
16 spend stuck in traffic, which will further reduce emissions;  
17 increasing transportation efficiency through compact  
18 development; and increasing the capacity to accommodate  
19 growth around existing infrastructure while helping to  
20 preserve open space.

21           The proposed plan also incorporates several  
22 concepts that will protect Rockville's waterways and help to  
23 clean up the Chesapeake Bay; creation of new City parks in  
24 the corridor will help to decrease the amount of impervious  
25 surface space in the area; the planting of street trees along

1 the Pike, as well as landscaping within the amenity zone will  
2 soak up stormwater runoff and contribute to reducing the  
3 urban heat island effect on outdoor temperatures; and lastly,  
4 as the Pike redevelopment's property owners will be required  
5 to comply with existing environmental laws which will result  
6 in a cleaner infrastructure. Examples of potential  
7 improvements include more energy efficient buildings,  
8 management of stormwater runoff on each property,  
9 installation of green roofs, and encouraging renewable energy  
10 technologies.

11 In conclusion, the member so the Environment  
12 Commission feel that the draft Rockville Pike Plan is  
13 consistent with the City's goals for environmental  
14 sustainability. We appreciate the Planning Commission's  
15 efforts to create a green vision for the Rockville Pike.  
16 Thank you very much.

17 CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Are there any questions for  
18 this gentleman?

19 COMMISSIONER HILL: Yes, I have one. You mentioned  
20 a park space in the Pike, do you have any preferred locations  
21 for that from an environmental point of view?

22 MR. REED: Well, I have ridden the Pike a lot with  
23 my son on bikes, and I could probably weigh in on that a  
24 little bit better. I don't know exactly what would be a  
25 preferred spot, but we love the idea of actually opening up

1 the space for public parks, and to increase the amenities  
2 outdoors so people will actually use that as a magnet.

3 COMMISSIONER HILL: Okay. Thank you.

4 MR. REED: Yes. Thank you very much.

5 CHAIRMAN: Thank you very --

6 COMMISSIONER HADLEY: I have --

7 CHAIRMAN: Sorry.

8 COMMISSIONER HADLEY: Have you considered the  
9 environmental impacts of rapid bus transit or other rapid  
10 transit forms as part of the plan, or --

11 MR. REED: Well, we --

12 COMMISSIONER HADLEY: -- as an adjunct to it?

13 MR. REED: -- we certainly looked at that, and we  
14 appreciate the multi-modal options that this plan provides,  
15 getting people out of the single occupancy cars and getting  
16 into much more mixed use forms of transportation, including  
17 rapid transit.

18 COMMISSIONER HADLEY: Are there any of those forms  
19 that you think would be more environmentally friendly or  
20 sustainable than others?

21 MR. REED: Not offhand, no.

22 COMMISSIONER HADLEY: Okay. Thank you.

23 MR. REED: Yes.

24 CHAIRMAN: Anyone else? Well, thank you very much,  
25 sir.

1 MR. REED: Thank you.

2 CHAIRMAN: Okay. Next on our list is, we have Lynn  
3 Perry Parker from Richard Montgomery High School PTSA. Five  
4 minutes on the clock, please, she's an organization. Thank  
5 you. Please state your name.

6 MS. PARKER: Good evening. I am Lynn Perry Parker,  
7 and I'm speaking on behalf of Richard Montgomery Parent  
8 Teacher Student Association. With me, as well, is Ginger  
9 Martin, our President; our Treasurer Kavita Dawson; and a  
10 Vice-President Zachary Levine. I'm a delegate, and that  
11 means that I'm a liaison between Richard Montgomery's PTA and  
12 Montgomery County Council of PTAs. We are here to speak  
13 about the Rockville Pike Plan, and in particular the  
14 extension of Fleet Street.

15 And before I get into what our actual concerns are  
16 with that extension I want to first acknowledge that we very  
17 much appreciate the amount of really good work that has gone  
18 into this Pike project, we recognize that, it's very  
19 exciting, and it looks like a very, very good project, so why  
20 do we have four people here in front of you? Because our  
21 concern about the Fleet Street extension is that serious to  
22 us, primarily it is a safety concern, and I think the only  
23 way that you can truly understand why we are coming out in  
24 force like this is to understand some particulars of this  
25 immediate community that we're talking about. Richard

1 Montgomery High School this year has over 2,000 students. If  
2 you want to see mass chaos come between 7:05 and 7:20 when  
3 you have regular drop off there, it is already a mess. Put  
4 down a rainy day and it's enough to make your blood pressure  
5 really go and your hair stand on end. It is really,  
6 really -- they're jumping out of cars, they're coming in,  
7 they're just, they're all over the place, cars are going  
8 every which way, and not just the students but the parents,  
9 as well, are not exactly well behaved in that area when it  
10 comes to traffic.

11 Another particular issue with respect to Richard  
12 Montgomery High School, again, we're talking 2,000 teenagers,  
13 they have an open lunch policy, as big as that school is we  
14 have so many students they can't possibly accommodate the  
15 lunch for these kids. We are talking about teenagers, they  
16 use what is now the footpath that you're proposing to put a  
17 two-lane highway, and we do appreciate the fact that it's not  
18 four lanes like it originally was planned, but these kids use  
19 this footpath to go over to the Richard Park, what is it,  
20 Ritchie Plaza over to the 7-11 there every single day, and  
21 we're talking about teenagers, you know, they have the cell  
22 phones and they're texting all the time in front of them,  
23 there's just that teenager age where the consequences of  
24 understanding what you're doing, and that goes, and  
25 everything else that goes with being a teenager. The idea of



1 putting more traffic in that area with all of these kids is a  
2 frightening proposition, to say the least. So, considering  
3 the risks and the safety issues then you kind of compare  
4 that, do a cost benefit analysis of what you're actually  
5 trying to accomplish by extending this roadway.

6 In the plan it says a couple of things, it says it  
7 will alleviate some of the congestion that's in the Rockville  
8 Pike and Wootton Parkway intersection. Now, we're talking  
9 about the very tip, the very northern tip of this plan, of  
10 this revision, of all the problem areas in Rockville Pike  
11 with congestion this is probably one of the least one of the  
12 problems, it's at the very end of the Rockville Pike problem.  
13 Secondly, it says that it will alleviate some of the cut  
14 through traffic between Ritchie Parkway, East Jefferson, and  
15 Edmonston, maybe. I live right down there. Okay. Let's  
16 assume you do get some, that they're going to pull some  
17 traffic off of Wootton Parkway over that, you give them a  
18 short cut to do, but then you've just taken it out of one  
19 neighborhood and you put it right into what street, Mt.  
20 Vernon, Mt. Vernon Street is also a residential street, and  
21 you're going to pull all of that traffic, it can only go one  
22 way if they're going downtown, all one way downtown and  
23 they'll all come back the other way. Again, right in front  
24 of the school, and right down that path with all of the  
25 students. So, I don't really see of all the proposals that

1 are in this plan that this particular item is not even  
2 necessary given the benefit and given the potential risks,  
3 very serious risks, it doesn't seem to be certainly not  
4 necessary and not all together wise, given the totality of  
5 the plan. Thank you.

6 CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Are there any questions of  
7 Ms. Parker?

8 COMMISSIONER HILL: Yes, I do have a question, and  
9 that is are there ways to mitigate the safety situations by  
10 street design as opposed to not building out the street grid  
11 of the City?

12 MS. PARKER: I suppose that we can always consider  
13 some mitigation, but again, your -- I'll answer it this way  
14 first, the plan really emphasizes so much on the need to have  
15 pedestrians safe, and pedestrian environment. Here, we have  
16 a really good use of pedestrian path right in front of a  
17 school in a neighborhood, it seems like we've already kind of  
18 achieved what you say in the whole thing you're trying to  
19 achieve, but now we want to put a plan in there, and we're  
20 going to make all these different exceptions to make it try  
21 to work, and I know there's diversions, you know, with the  
22 cameras and that kind of thing, but we all know that you've,  
23 we've all learned where the cameras are and then you stop  
24 right in front of the camera, and then they continue to speed  
25 up, the hours that this street will be used is during rush

1 hour, people are already stressed because they've been in  
2 traffic on the southern part of Rockville Pike on Wootton  
3 Parkway. So, I mean, yes, there are mitigating factors, but  
4 again, you know, why try to contrive a solution when there  
5 really wasn't a problem where it exists right now, and maybe  
6 a better way of expanding more pedestrian use rather than  
7 putting more cars on there.

8 COMMISSIONER HILL: Okay. Thank you.

9 CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Any other questions? Thank  
10 you very much.

11 MS. PARKER: Thank you.

12 CHAIRMAN: Okay. Next on the list is Mary van  
13 Balgooy from Peerless Rockville. Handouts.

14 MS. VAN BALGOOY: Pass those down, that would be  
15 great.

16 CHAIRMAN: I guess I pass them this way. Pass to  
17 your left.

18 MS. VAN BALGOOY: Good evening, I'm Mary van  
19 Balgooy, Executive Director of Peerless Rockville Historic  
20 Preservation. As I mentioned in previous comments to the  
21 Planning Commission about Rockville Pike's future, we cannot  
22 afford to forget its past. In reading and reviewing the plan  
23 certain sentences and phrases jumped out at me about the  
24 future of Rockville's Pike. In order for it to be successful  
25 it should have the following, one, a distinctive character;

1 two, architecture that has visual interest; three, it should  
2 be an appealing and interesting place that adds to the  
3 community's character; four, it should promote an appreciate  
4 of the Pike's role in Rockville's history. So, I was  
5 surprised when I read, quote, much of the Rockville Pike  
6 corridor has the undistinguished look of generic and aging  
7 suburban strip development, end quote, and, quote, there are  
8 few buildings on today's Rockville Pike that offer enduring  
9 architecture, end quote. Peerless believes differently.  
10 Before you are three buildings that we deem eligible for  
11 historic designation based on their architecture alone that  
12 will give the Pike character, visual interest, community  
13 character, and an appreciate for Rockville's history.

14 I was also surprised to read that only, quote,  
15 after plan adoption the City should consider allocating  
16 sufficient resources to analyze which buildings, if any,  
17 qualify for historic designation, end quote. Planning and  
18 development happens fast when everyone knows up front what  
19 the expectations are, such as where the transportation lanes  
20 are, building heights, business districts, open space, park  
21 space, et cetera. These are in the plan, but not properties  
22 that might qualify for historic designation. Research and  
23 analysis of properties along the Rockville Pike should have  
24 occurred at the same time when developing this plan, in the  
25 long run it will save time and money for the City. Through

1 Peerless Rockville's recent past survey project, which  
2 resulted in a book, we have already identified potential  
3 properties for designation, they only need more research to  
4 verify their importance to the City's history.

5           Preservation is nothing new to this City, we know  
6 the benefits, and we have certainly learned our lessons when  
7 we don't pay attention to our past, as happened with the  
8 development of our downtown during urban renewal. I  
9 encourage you not to adopt this plan until the properties  
10 along Rockville's Pike have been analyzed to see what may  
11 qualify for designation. We cannot afford to lose this  
12 City's history because once gone it is gone forever. Thank  
13 you.

14           CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Do we have any questions of  
15 Ms. van Balgooy?

16           MR. TYNER: Mary, did you say there were three  
17 buildings in your handout?

18           MS. VAN BALGOOY: Yes.

19           MR. TYNER: Okay.

20           MS. VAN BALGOOY: Did you not get three?

21           MR. TYNER: Thanks. It stuck to the back.

22           MS. VAN BALGOOY: And these are just based on  
23 architecture alone, which is one of the --

24           MR. TYNER: Yes.

25           MS. VAN BALGOOY: -- criteria for local

1 designation.

2 MR. TYNER: Yes. Okay.

3 CHAIRMAN: Okay.

4 COMMISSIONER HILL: Yes, I have two questions.

5 MS. VAN BALGOOY: Sure.

6 COMMISSIONER HILL: I would like to ask you about a  
7 fourth building that's in the Pike corridor, which is I think  
8 the last remnant building of the airport on Congressional  
9 Lane.

10 MS. VAN BALGOOY: Are you talking about the Womack  
11 building?

12 UNIDENTIFIED COMMISSIONER: The Womack building,  
13 yes.

14 MS. VAN BALGOOY: There's a debate as to whether  
15 that more research needs to be done on that building because  
16 it may have been a so-called overnight hotel for pilots, but  
17 in talking to Womack and their family members they do say it  
18 was built in 1952 and not in the 1920s when Congressional  
19 Airport was there.

20 COMMISSIONER HILL: Okay.

21 MS. VAN BALGOOY: So, we would definitely have to  
22 verify whether there are those remnants within the building  
23 that they actually added onto it, or built a house around it.

24 COMMISSIONER HILL: Okay. But you advocate for  
25 that to be looked at at the same time?

1 MS. VAN BALGOOY: Definitely.

2 COMMISSIONER HILL: It's not on the Pike, but  
3 it's --

4 MS. VAN BALGOOY: Yes.

5 COMMISSIONER HILL: -- within the corridor.

6 MS. VAN BALGOOY: I did, and I also in previous, in  
7 a previous letter that I did do to the Planning Commission in  
8 2011 I listed something like 12 places, they just need some  
9 more research to make sure that we do know the dates, and  
10 that there are those, for instance, with Womack, those are  
11 those remnants there that they can be sufficient, that  
12 they're sufficient enough to meet the criteria for local  
13 designation.

14 COMMISSIONER HILL: Okay.

15 MS. VAN BALGOOY: So, for instance, there's the  
16 McDonald's that was once on the Pike, but it's probably been  
17 so substantially altered that it might not fit criteria, but  
18 then that's something that needs to be looked into.

19 COMMISSIONER HILL: Okay. I'm glad to see a  
20 recommendation for 1335 on Rockville Pike, it's one of my  
21 favorite buildings on the Pike that I think we should  
22 definitely consider preserving.

23 CHAIRMAN: If you did have a list of, they  
24 submitted, what, in 2011 for the initial review of the plan?

25 MS. VAN BALGOOY: Yes.

1 CHAIRMAN: If you could re-submit that, that would  
2 probably be very helpful.

3 MS. VAN BALGOOY: Sure, I have that.

4 CHAIRMAN: Okay.

5 MS. VAN BALGOOY: I will do that.

6 CHAIRMAN: Great. Thank you.

7 COMMISSIONER HILL: Are you aware that any of these  
8 buildings are really at risk in terms of the cross-section of  
9 the transportation, that sort of thing? Because I think that  
10 one of our thinking was that we were establishing kind of a  
11 footprint, we didn't see resources that were really at risk  
12 because of that plan and that gave us time to look at the  
13 details later.

14 MS. VAN BALGOOY: I believe they are at risk  
15 because the Pike is always changing very quickly. If you'll  
16 notice --

17 COMMISSIONER HILL: Okay.

18 MS. VAN BALGOOY: -- Talbots was one of the places  
19 that we put the Talbots Shopping Center, I don't know if you  
20 know that, that's close by Edmonston and such? That has  
21 already changed its facade, and so these properties are at  
22 risk of changing all the time because people are, new  
23 developers, or I should say new owners are coming in and  
24 trying to change the face of them to update them and such,  
25 and so we need to make sure that our, I should say ensure



1 that if they're designated soon enough that these changes  
2 won't take place so that they're not substantially altered  
3 and then they won't fit for designation. Because again, this  
4 is our history, and this is what you find along the Pike that  
5 we have right now.

6 COMMISSIONER HILL: Thank you.

7 CHAIRMAN: Anyone else? Dion?

8 COMMISSIONER TRAHAN: This isn't a sophisticated  
9 question at all, Ms. van Balgooy, but these buildings are  
10 ugly, I mean, that's just my take --

11 MS. VAN BALGOOY: Sure.

12 COMMISSIONER TRAHAN: -- right, 63 and 69 with that  
13 revival sort of sixties look, what do you say about those  
14 people that say okay, well, I mean, I understand the historic  
15 building, we understand the background, but how does that  
16 speak to Rockville; and then, too, those people that say  
17 well, these buildings are ugly, I mean, why not change them?  
18 I guess I just don't see the historic reason these buildings  
19 should be saved and not adapted with the Pike. And mind you,  
20 you know, I'm an amateur history buff, so, I mean, I'm on  
21 your side, it's just I don't get it.

22 MS. VAN BALGOOY: Sure. First of all, beauty is in  
23 the eye of the beholder, so what you may not like, other  
24 people will see. The buildings that were built here in the  
25 1950s and 60s they're, right now a lot of people are the, not

1 so much maybe the older generation, but somebody like in my  
2 generation are looking at these and saying that's pretty  
3 cool, I like this new formalism style that you see. And so,  
4 you cannot base your necessarily what you think is good  
5 looking as much as how does it speak to the architecture of  
6 the day? Is this a good example of it or not? And certainly  
7 we've seen that in the past with like, for instance, downtown  
8 Rockville and such we've seen a lot of our buildings  
9 demolished because at that time people thought oh, they're  
10 not beautiful, in fact, St. Mary's Chapel is a good example  
11 of people thinking that was old and worn and such, the  
12 parishioners came together and said we don't want this at  
13 this point in time to be demolished, we do think this  
14 building is beautiful, and as a result of that it's a  
15 cherished landmark. You can say the same thing about the B  
16 and O Railroad across the street, that was another one that  
17 people thought oh, it's worn down, it's not pretty any more,  
18 that type of thing, and you can see it was brought back to  
19 life and now it's again a cherished landmark in this city.

20 I would also say that in importance to the  
21 Rockville Pike as far as its history goes, some of these  
22 buildings like Donald Johnson, just the one building at 1010  
23 Rockville Pike, and the other one on 50 West Edmonston Drive  
24 by Jack Sullivan, these are local architects around here who  
25 are doing a lot of the buildings that we see today. And so,

1 these are very important architects here to Rockville. Sure,  
2 we don't have Frank Lloyd Wright, love to have him, but we  
3 don't. But we do have these great architects in themselves,  
4 and Jack Sullivan is an award winning architect, as well as  
5 Donald Johnson and the group that he was with. So, I think  
6 we need to remember that, as well. And once, you know, when  
7 you get anybody kind of designing a building that may be  
8 something different, but vernacular architecture it's also  
9 very important, as well, because it does speak to what the  
10 community is feeling at that time that best fits their needs,  
11 what they thought was great architecture, as well.

12 CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Don?

13 COMMISSIONER HADLEY: To what extent would further  
14 research for a possible designation take into consideration  
15 the life span or the shelf life of the structures of these  
16 buildings, and the costs of maintaining them in the future?

17 MS. VAN BALGOOY: I can't tell you just the cost to  
18 maintain them in the future. One thing we do talk about is  
19 sustainability here in the City of Rockville, we pride  
20 ourself on that. What better use than to adaptive reuses, we  
21 call, of these buildings? That saves a lot of energy as well  
22 as money in itself. And it requires, as it says here in the  
23 particular Pike Plan, it takes creativity, and that's what  
24 they're looking for, this enduring architecture, you know, to  
25 take place through creativity. And so, I feel that

1 sustainability and reusing these buildings is very important  
2 to the Pike Plan itself.

3 CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Anyone else?

4 MR. TYNER: Mary, in your book on recent Rockville  
5 there are a lot of places in there that depending on how one  
6 views the building, whether they're pretty or not pretty, but  
7 the bottom line of it all is whether we can either Peerless  
8 or the City can persuade a property owner that it needs to be  
9 saved. It's really the property owner's decision on what  
10 they could or could not do with that piece of property. And  
11 that really goes back to the cost of renovating as against  
12 maintaining or, not renovating but restoring, you might say,  
13 at least the facade, and so much of that is something that  
14 we've discussed, but we haven't really gone into that, so I  
15 appreciate your handout here. And there are other buildings  
16 along the Pike that we have talked about, but most of them  
17 seem to be beyond the pale, done too far. I know of, I can't  
18 make that, the one that has the tire place in the back that  
19 used to be a very interesting mansion that the Chamber used  
20 to be in, too, some years ago, but that's been completely  
21 changed and adjusted, so some of that would, the City would  
22 depend on you guys to, whether there's any significance  
23 there. And I know there have been a number of properties  
24 that you all and the Historic District Commission have looked  
25 at and decided that well, that was great once upon a time,

1 but there really isn't any redeeming elements left. So,  
2 those are some of the things that we'd have to, and the City  
3 take a peek at as we go through this whole plan.

4 MS. VAN BALGOOY: Well, and certainly. And we've  
5 done a lot of the survey work already, so it does require, in  
6 answer to your question, Commissioner Hadley, that we just  
7 more research needs to be done about a particular architect  
8 because we can't find one, and that's readily available  
9 through the city permits, I'm sure of that. And what was  
10 Commissioner Tyner was saying, too, is that a lot of, you  
11 know, some of the facades have changed on the Pike, but other  
12 ones like the Tenley Building at 50 West Edmonston, the  
13 facade is still there, they haven't changed it all, they've  
14 changed the interior, they have updated the interior, but the  
15 facade is there and it looks great, I mean, it doesn't need  
16 any, you know, cleaning up, so to speak. And so --

17 MR. TYNER: Until the recent canopy.

18 MS. VAN BALGOOY: But otherwise, I mean, it's  
19 basically there, and it's been unaltered more than anything  
20 else, and I think that's important to remember. And we  
21 certainly like to, we don't want to go up against, you know,  
22 we can, a property can be nominated without the owner's  
23 consent, we don't have to, we don't like to do that, we want  
24 to, you know, have the owner be a part of this more than  
25 anything else because there are tax credits and everything

1 else that you can have for that, plus, again, it becomes this  
2 landmark in the City that people become proud of, and  
3 certainly the owners do, too. Sometimes it's a, you know,  
4 it's a, it takes awhile for them to kind of find that out,  
5 but it does happen over time, and that's what we've seen with  
6 preservation in the City.

7 MR. TAYLOR: Thank you.

8 CHAIRMAN: Okay, thank you. Any further questions?  
9 Than you very much.

10 MS. VAN BALGOOY: Uh-huh.

11 CHAIRMAN: Okay. Let's see, next on our list is  
12 Anne Goodman. May we have three minutes on the clock,  
13 please?

14 MS. GOODMAN: Good evening, Planning Commissioners.  
15 My name is Anne Goodman, and I live at 1109 Clagett Drive,  
16 Rockville --

17 CHAIRMAN: Please speak into the mic.

18 MS. GOODMAN: 1109 -- short people.

19 UNIDENTIFIED COMMISSIONER: Yes, that was good.

20 MS. GOODMAN: 1109 Clagett Drive, Rockville 20851  
21 in the Twinbrook neighborhood, a neighborhood that will be  
22 heavily impacted by this plan.

23 In my written comments, which I submitted some time  
24 ago, I documented several concerns. It's all, it's good to  
25 have a plan, and a lot of elements of the plan are good, but

1 if my calculations are correct the plan anticipates that  
2 nearly 3.5 times the number of people that currently live in  
3 Twinbrook will be moving into an even smaller area than the  
4 Twinbrook area in the next couple of decades, that's a lot of  
5 folks, that's a lot of traffic. And my concern is the impact  
6 that, not just on the Pike, but behind the Pike. The  
7 potential impact on the quality of life, and safety in  
8 Twinbrook and the surrounding neighborhoods, in my written  
9 comments I mentioned infrastructure, Metro, Pepco, schools,  
10 roads to handle the increased volume, disruption of traffic  
11 by construction, potential loss of small businesses, business  
12 retail establishments to be replaced by high end retail  
13 concerns, which is very different from the character of the  
14 neighborhood right now, affect our neighborhood diversity and  
15 green landscaping practices.

16 I don't want to go over those again, what I'd like  
17 to do is comment on the previous public hearing because some  
18 things happened that concerned me. There were only two or  
19 three speakers at that public meetings, and Rockville  
20 citizens were chided for not being there at that meeting. I  
21 found that unfair, and almost offensive. In the first place,  
22 the document I don't think was very readily accessible. I  
23 personally find things very difficult to read on a computer  
24 screen, hard copies were available at City Hall, in the  
25 libraries, but there you have to go to City Hall and the

1 library and sit there for hours and hours, because this is  
2 not an easy document to read and digest. So, that I consider  
3 a hardship.

4 I may have missed it, but I didn't pick up on  
5 whether the document were available in any language other  
6 than English, which it probably should have been if it  
7 wasn't, that biases --

8 CHAIRMAN: Thirty seconds.

9 MS. GOODMAN: -- response greatly. What?

10 CHAIRMAN: Thirty seconds.

11 MS. GOODMAN: Okay. In addition, the first public  
12 held meeting was held three weeks after the document was  
13 released, that's minimal time. Finally, when I mentioned the  
14 fact that I was planning to comment on the document to some  
15 other people, several of them said why are you wasting your  
16 time, they won't listen anyway? And when I read the Staff  
17 response to my written comments there were no mention of what  
18 I think is a major problem, and that's impact on the  
19 neighborhoods. Thank you very much.

20 CHAIRMAN: Okay. Thank you.

21 COMMISSIONER HILL: Ms. Goodman?

22 CHAIRMAN: Any questions?

23 COMMISSIONER HILL: Ms. Goodman?

24 CHAIRMAN: Ms. Goodman?

25 COMMISSIONER HILL: Yes. I just wanted to mention



1 that I enjoyed reading your written submission, which is four  
2 pages or so. I thought you asked excellent questions in that  
3 submission.

4 MS. GOODMAN: Thank you.

5 COMMISSIONER HILL: So, I just wanted to reassure  
6 you that we have it and we're considering it.

7 MS. GOODMAN: Okay.

8 CHAIRMAN: Anyone else?

9 COMMISSIONER TRAHAN: Yes.

10 CHAIRMAN: Dion?

11 COMMISSIONER TRAHAN: I have a question.

12 CHAIRMAN: Ms. Goodman. You're popular.

13 COMMISSIONER TRAHAN: So, Ms. Goodman, I'm just  
14 going to play devil's advocate here, and beg my pardon  
15 because I do agree with you. But if we are to have this  
16 housing crisis in two or three decades where people aren't  
17 going to be able to afford, we've got more people moving into  
18 the County and the City smart growth would say that, you  
19 know, along the Metro lines put them along those major hubs,  
20 the Twinbrook development being one. I'm not saying it's  
21 right or wrong, I'm just saying that that's a school of  
22 thought. How should we look at the potential imminent  
23 housing crisis some say are coming to our city and we need to  
24 prepare for it smartly versus just letting it sort of spiral  
25 out of control? Also, considering the fact that our elderly

1 citizens are going to move out of their houses and probably  
2 go to one or two bedroom apartments or condos, I mean, so  
3 taking all that in consideration how should we balance the  
4 need for growth and also keep things the way they are in  
5 Twinbrook, Lincoln Park, the west end?

6 MS. GOODMAN: I understand that growth is going to  
7 happen, and I'm not against growth, I just think we need to  
8 do a considered approach to this and not overgrowth. You  
9 know, 3.5 times as many people moving in, that means 4.5  
10 times as many people, and I know there are going to be  
11 developments, and there are going to be developments like one  
12 of the Twinbrook developments near the Metro stations has a  
13 lot of good characteristics about it, but I don't think you  
14 can go on putting development after development after  
15 development. And I know horror stories about riding Metro,  
16 I've experienced the horror of Pepco, and I just don't see  
17 how all of this is going to jell with the magnitude of the  
18 changes that you're talking about. And I am still concerned  
19 about the fact that nobody seems to address what's happening  
20 off the Pike. I'm an old person, and I'm going to stay in my  
21 house as long as I can possibly walk up the steps. I have no  
22 intention of moving to a condo, and many people want, you  
23 know, want to age in the home, age at home. Does that help  
24 any?

25 COMMISSIONER TRAHAN: Yes, it does. Thank you.

1 CHAIRMAN: All right. Thank you. Any other  
2 questions? All right. Thank you very much. Next we have  
3 Nancy Regelin.

4 MS. REGELIN: Good evening.

5 CHAIRMAN: Good evening.

6 MS. REGELIN: Nancy Regelin, I'm a land use  
7 attorney at 1205 Park Potomac. Even though I am a land use  
8 attorney, all the opinions expressed tonight are my own.  
9 Because I've practiced in Rockville for so long I just wanted  
10 to share a thought on the plan. My nits will come separately  
11 in writing, but here's the big pictures.

12 Structural heavy lifting has been done in the plan  
13 where I think a lot of good work was done to work on the  
14 problems of transportation, and connectivity, et cetera, and  
15 it talks about parks, and discussion about form, height,  
16 structure, but I seem to be missing what I, my initial  
17 complaint about the plan was we seem to be missing that spark  
18 of life, and here's my thoughts, which is I think we need  
19 some language in the plan about innovation and culture. And  
20 I'm not so naive to think that a plan can dictate culture,  
21 that is not what I'm saying, but I think planning can enable  
22 culture. And here's what triggered this thought is just two  
23 weeks ago Robin Chase who started Zipcar, which takes the  
24 excess capacity of a single car and creates a platform so  
25 that lots of people can use it, she challenged the real

1 estate industry and said what excess capacity do you have in  
2 your projects, and how are you designing it so other people  
3 can use it, your lobbies, your garages, your public space?  
4 And it triggered in my mind that Rockville has a legacy of  
5 doing this. Obviously, Rockville Town Square is a perfect  
6 example, that public space is be able to use 24 hours a day  
7 if it needed to be in all seasons, but even East Montgomery  
8 Avenue was designed for the farmer's market so that there  
9 were no vehicular entrances in that block so that the  
10 farmer's market could use the excess capacity of the streets  
11 in Rockville to have a festival. And when we have hometown  
12 holidays coming up we know the challenges of putting a street  
13 festival or any kind of other kind of cultural event in  
14 places where we have excess capacity, where we're not using  
15 it at that moment in time. So, my challenge to you is in the  
16 section of the plan that talks about public spaces and open  
17 spaces, and perhaps even in the parks, that we talk about  
18 innovation, and designing public spaces for public culture,  
19 because I have no concerns that Rockville has enough  
20 personality, character, niche interests to bring all the  
21 public culture as long as --

22 CHAIRMAN: Thirty seconds.

23 MS. REGELIN: -- spaces are created so that they  
24 can use them. So, as we're designing Rockville Pike there is  
25 other places in Town Square to have festivals, and maybe

1 they're different kinds, but I would have that thought in the  
2 plan, and I would ask you to challenge the re-developments to  
3 talk about how they are creating this urban system to support  
4 public culture.

5 CHAIRMAN: Okay. Thank you. Thank you. Are there  
6 any questions?

7 MR. TYNER: Question. Nancy, park and roses  
8 prospect, putting a building in an abstract, more on the  
9 operating part of that, that's something perhaps that goes  
10 along with what you're thinking of that we could do along the  
11 Pike, as well. It doesn't have to be street busking, but it  
12 could be alternate uses within the buildings that we have  
13 that are considered open space, if that's the sort of thing  
14 you're talking about.

15 MS. REGELIN: Well, and what you challenged was a  
16 lot of things, like in a public parking garage, in a private  
17 parking garage there are probably certain days and time when  
18 there is space that is not being used, let's say it's for  
19 mixed use and the commercial space is not being used on a  
20 Saturday morning, it's covered space, that space as long as  
21 it's accessible to the public and not secured and designed in  
22 a way that the public can't get in there and use it, it could  
23 be used for a festival or for a farmer's market. Or your  
24 lobby, if it was designed in such a way it could be used for  
25 public, you know, gatherings of certain sorts, as long as

1 they're designed in such a way to be used that. And I think  
2 that's the key. And even I look at Chapman Avenue, which is  
3 one that I'm most familiar with, and each I think of the  
4 plans that have come in have had very, you know, looking into  
5 themselves about their public spaces, and how it would work  
6 on their own plan, and there's no real connectivity, and so I  
7 think the buzz word is, you know, urban system. So, we  
8 should be thinking about how these projects will connect for,  
9 to enable public culture to use our public ground. So, I  
10 think that kind of concept, that innovative concept which is  
11 the trend that, you know, the great cities of the world are  
12 going to, that it should be in Rockville, because I think the  
13 Pike is, we don't want to lose that opportunity for it to be  
14 really --

15 MR. TYNER: Some of our County garages used to have  
16 community service shall we call them antique sales? Where  
17 they come and, some of us might call them junktique sales,  
18 but, yes, things can be done along with the folks that wish  
19 to develop things on the Pike, especially from the cultural  
20 aspect. So, I thank you for that.

21 MS. REGELIN: Yes. I mean, this isn't my realm,  
22 the park and rec side, but I go to enough of them myself,  
23 and, you know, are we designing spaces where you could have  
24 your literary festival, and you could have the used book, you  
25 know, market going on? I mean, are we creating a place where

1 a cultural festival could happen so it doesn't, you know, it  
2 could happen someplace other than Town Center so that all of  
3 our public culture is throughout the City. So --

4 CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Other questions?

5 COMMISSIONER HILL: I'd like to tell you a quick  
6 anecdote, because I'd like to look back to you, particularly  
7 as you're, as a counsel to these properties, on the question  
8 of access, which you mentioned, which is how do we sustain  
9 that? The anecdote is that I remember a special exception  
10 regarding one of the religious institutions that was being  
11 put in a neighborhood, and there were limits on how late in  
12 the day they could operate because of the impact on the  
13 residential neighborhoods. And one of the things we tried to  
14 do was to get that opened up so the community might use that,  
15 you know, that institutional space in those hours for public  
16 meetings, because this particular community didn't have their  
17 own meeting space.

18 MS. REGELIN: Right.

19 COMMISSIONER HILL: And the user thought that was a  
20 great idea, but by the time the two lawyers in the room on  
21 both sides of the issues got done talking they were scared  
22 about the liability of doing that, so they said no. So, how  
23 do we handle that particular question? A related, part of  
24 that was, remember RORZOR (phonetic sp.), you served on it, I  
25 remember, RORZOR made a pretty assertive percentage about the

1 public accessible space on the different properties in town,  
2 which got dialed back significantly in later parts of the  
3 process, and I think one of the big issues there was that the  
4 building owners were worried about giving public access to  
5 such a percentage, and they wanted to have credit for, an  
6 open space credit, for example, for roof terraces, and things  
7 like that, that the public couldn't get to. So, I see that  
8 as a --

9 MS. REGELIN: Yes. But I --

10 COMMISSIONER HILL: -- challenge here, right?

11 MS. REGELIN: -- I will tell you, Mr. Hill, that's  
12 not actually the direction that I'm going. I understand  
13 where you're coming from. Your first part which is the  
14 attorneys got, and were all concerned about security.  
15 Security is the death knell for access, there is no  
16 question --

17 COMMISSIONER HILL: Right.

18 MS. REGELIN: -- but it can be designed around. I  
19 mean, Robin Chase put a picture up of this beautiful  
20 auditorium, and she said this auditorium is in my daughter's  
21 elementary school and it's used three times a years, what a  
22 fantastic public space, it cannot be used because to access  
23 it you have to go through the school and the security is  
24 wrong. So, it was a design issue, it can be designed around  
25 so that access and security are not at odds with each other.



1 So, but you have to design it that way to begin with because  
2 often times you can't fix the security problems later.

3 COMMISSIONER HILL: Right.

4 MS. REGELIN: So, even if someone has a meeting  
5 space in their, for their own use, if it's designed so that  
6 they can have the security between the meeting space and the  
7 rest of their residential building, and it's designed that  
8 way to begin with, then it can be used by the outside public.  
9 But that's the challenge, it has to be designed into it  
10 originally.

11 COMMISSIONER HILL: So, we need to set the standard  
12 of expectation that this is what we're looking for, and ask  
13 questions about how it's delivered --

14 MS. REGELIN: Yes, I think --

15 COMMISSIONER HILL: -- is that --

16 MS. REGELIN: -- I think you should be questioning  
17 about how it's going to be used. And size does not matter in  
18 this case.

19 COMMISSIONER HILL: Yes.

20 MS. REGELIN: So, I'm not talking about parks, I'm  
21 talking about the public realms that could be used for other  
22 things. So, I'm not talking about the green space that we  
23 know we need tot lots, and dog runs, and things like that,  
24 but just the public realm. I mean, the entire plan talks  
25 basically about how we're going to have cafe after cafe after

1 cafe, or just people walking down these sidewalks. That's  
2 not enough life, shopping and walking and sitting, that's not  
3 enough life for the miles of this Pike, we need to bring  
4 other activities here, and we need to be able to enable them.  
5 So --

6 COMMISSIONER HILL: Just the areas that you're  
7 asking for creativity, I just want to sort of plum what you  
8 think, you know, I think we've covered parking and  
9 transportation kind of reuse quite significantly in the plan,  
10 and certainly we've talked about park dedication and some  
11 open space dedication, you mentioned lobbies, which is an  
12 interesting item to me. I was driving through a big city  
13 recently at night and looking in all these beautiful glass  
14 lobbies, beautifully decorated that were emptied for, you  
15 know, 18 hours of the day, basically, and wonder what about  
16 those.

17 MS. REGELIN: Well, the winter garden in New  
18 York --

19 COMMISSIONER HILL: Yes.

20 MS. REGELIN: -- is the perfect example of what is  
21 a lobby, which is an indoor space that's used by everyone,  
22 and New York has figured out how to do the, this is still,  
23 you know, private space.

24 COMMISSIONER HILL: Right. Did it cover the gamut  
25 of what you're thinking about, though, or are there other

1 elements of that?

2 MS. REGELIN: Yes. I mean, I keep seeing in these  
3 projects that are being discussed, or I see there are pieces  
4 of it that could be used, and not just the lobbies, that was  
5 just an example, but there are lobby spaces that -- I will  
6 tell you, the Rockville Chamber had one of the greatest  
7 parties ever in 255 Rockville Pike, now that lobby off of  
8 Monroe Street is not that exciting, you know, you go in, and  
9 then you go up a couple of steps and it's just a space, but  
10 the party there was fun, it push everybody in one space, it  
11 was extremely accessible to the street, and I think well,  
12 it's not the space that was fantastic, but the space enabled  
13 the Chamber to have a party and have all these people easily  
14 enter it and, you know, enjoy themselves. So, it's the  
15 enabling, I think, that's the key. And I know you can't  
16 dictate culture, and you can't say this is going to be  
17 Chinatown, and this is going to be, you know, unless you put  
18 a huge civic institution there, but you can enable it for  
19 organic community grown culture, and that's really what I'm  
20 asking. So --

21 COMMISSIONER LEIDERMAN: I have a -- if we were to  
22 go in that direction and state that sort of a thing in the  
23 plan is that enough to simply state it as a vision, or are  
24 there things that need to go in the Code that would  
25 operationalize that? Because not every developer is going to

1 embrace that necessarily are there certain standards that --

2 MS. REGELIN: So, I would say yes, because you have  
3 a parking code, and it says even though you can reduce it for  
4 shared uses you still have to have parking available. Maybe  
5 some day when we figure this out we could figure out how you  
6 could use parking during the period where there's excess  
7 capacity and you don't need it. And the same thing with the  
8 on street parking spaces, maybe there's a way we could --  
9 there's lots of cities that on maybe Sundays or something  
10 they allow, you know, the cafes to move out into the parking  
11 spaces well that's right there, or they even let the, in San  
12 Francisco I know they let people bring their chairs and have  
13 parties down in the parking spaces. I mean, that's a  
14 cultural thing, like when you think, that's cool. So,  
15 there's lots of things to be thinking about in that way, and  
16 I think that there are going to be zoning re-write things to  
17 allow the flexible use of our excess capacity, I just don't  
18 know that we have the answers yet. I think it's almost when  
19 something comes up it's going to have to be dynamic and we're  
20 going to have to address it. But the plan should say we  
21 should be innovative enough to be able to roll with those and  
22 enable it. So --

23 COMMISSIONER LEIDERMAN: Thank you.

24 COMMISSIONER TRAHAN: So, that line, you know, a  
25 spoon full of sugar helps the medicine go down comes in my

1 mind because my paranoia says okay, it sounds like what  
2 someone is advocating is the radical urbanization of  
3 Rockville, and to sell it we try to fabricate this sort of  
4 inorganic pockets of culture that's going to be an up and  
5 down, high density urbanized corridor, that's not my  
6 philosophy. I'm just trying to play devil's advocate here.

7 MS. REGELIN: Well, I hope you're not putting those  
8 words in my mouth or my mind, okay.

9 COMMISSIONER TRAHAN: Didn't say that. I'm just --

10 MS. REGELIN: Okay.

11 COMMISSIONER TRAHAN: -- playing on my healthy  
12 paranoia.

13 MS. REGELIN: Okay.

14 COMMISSIONER TRAHAN: So, having said that, and  
15 then a fancy consultant when this whole thing came out, came  
16 out here and insulted us and said well, you have no character  
17 in your city --

18 MS. REGELIN: I don't agree with that.

19 COMMISSIONER TRAHAN: I don't either, but for the  
20 sake of more conversation, there are places in the City that  
21 are designed just for those kind of where the heart of the  
22 City is, right? The Town Center, a couple of other places,  
23 how would you address someone saying well, what you're trying  
24 to do, not you specifically, but someone advocating this  
25 urbanization and these pockets of culture is trying to really

1 pitch the City on high density and let's sort of take little  
2 pieces of Rockville and make the urbanization feel more like  
3 home, I mean, would that be a totally inaccurate statement?

4 MS. REGELIN: Yes, and here's why, if you go into  
5 any of the new multi-family buildings that are being  
6 developed and you really look at the plans, and then you go  
7 in and fill the spaces, you will find that those private  
8 recreational spaces provide a lot of open, outdoor, active  
9 spaces for those people that are living there. It doesn't  
10 take the place of the big green park, but there's a lot of  
11 outdoor space now in these interior courtyards, or their open  
12 space around their projects. That's an internal building by  
13 building thing, what's on the public realm, which is what I'm  
14 talking about, let's design the public realm, the sidewalks,  
15 the extra open, public open spaces that you're asking to be  
16 put on each of these projects, so that it's a community  
17 space, so that, for example, in Chapman Avenue the people  
18 from Twinbrook feel comfortable coming through the Metro  
19 station and joining in at the public realm with people that  
20 are now living on Chapman Avenue. So, I'm not using it, I'm  
21 personally not using it as a justification to get more  
22 density, what I'm saying is, is that there will be people  
23 living in the Rockville Pike corridor, and they should have  
24 as much public culture and community and connectivity to the  
25 rest of Rockville that we've like layered on in mass in

1 Rockville Town Center. I mean, let's not miss the  
2 opportunity for the Pike to be more than a really, you know,  
3 traffic will now move better, it will be multi-modal, and  
4 there will be lots of, you know, great commercial, it will be  
5 another neighborhood, let's create neighborhood.

6 COMMISSIONER TRAHAN: Thank you.

7 CHAIRMAN: Okay. One more question?

8 COMMISSIONER HADLEY: Ms. Regelin --

9 CHAIRMAN: Briefly.

10 MS. REGELIN: Yes.

11 CHAIRMAN: Otherwise this is a marathon for you.

12 COMMISSIONER HADLEY: Public parks and squares  
13 provide regular use and more green space use, how does this  
14 concept of excess capacity correlate or integrate with what  
15 has been the perceive to have public parks?

16 MS. REGELIN: So, public parks are dedicated open  
17 space for that use. All right. So, here is an example of  
18 excess capacity, there --

19 COMMISSIONER HADLEY: No, I understand that. I  
20 understand the physical difference. I'm sorry I'm  
21 interrupting you --

22 MS. REGELIN: Yes.

23 COMMISSIONER HADLEY: -- but I guess my specific  
24 thought is that having excess capacity could result in a  
25 rationale to reduce parks and squares thereby creating sort

1 of irregular public use spaces rather than regular public use  
2 and meeting spaces.

3 MS. REGELIN: That's not what I'm --

4 COMMISSIONER HADLEY: Okay.

5 MS. REGELIN: -- trying to get to --

6 COMMISSIONER HADLEY: Right.

7 MS. REGELIN: -- which is -- that's why I said I'm  
8 really not addressing parks, because parks have a  
9 different --

10 COMMISSIONER HADLEY: Yes.

11 MS. REGELIN: -- need.

12 COMMISSIONER HADLEY: So, this is an addition and a  
13 supplement, not a substitute.

14 MS. REGELIN: Yes, I'm talking --

15 COMMISSIONER HADLEY: Yes.

16 MS. REGELIN: -- to the public realm around these  
17 projects, and in our streets, and, you know. Okay?

18 CHAIRMAN: Okay. Thank you very much.

19 COMMISSIONER OSTELL: I was just hoping -- Ms.  
20 Regelin, you don't need to --

21 CHAIRMAN: Hold it.

22 COMMISSIONER OSTELL: -- to stand here, but I was  
23 just hoping, this is obviously an interesting subject, and  
24 I'm mindful of the number of people in the room, maybe you  
25 could send us some references towards these ideas, because I



1 think they're very intriguing.

2 MS. REGELIN: Yes. Actually, I have a couple of  
3 articles with some pictures, too, of the spaces.

4 CHAIRMAN: That would be great.

5 COMMISSIONER OSTELL: That would be very helpful,  
6 rather than trying to --

7 CHAIRMAN: Yes, trying to --

8 COMMISSIONER OSTELL: -- sort it all out tonight.

9 CHAIRMAN: -- hash it all out here. Thank you.

10 All right. That is it. Has anyone else signed in? Is there  
11 any other additional sign-ins? All right. Then we will go  
12 to open. Is there anyone who wishes to speak on the Pike?  
13 Sir? Please state your name and address for the record.

14 MR. TOLERTON: Hi, I'm Allen Tolerton, I'm a  
15 resident of Rockville at 4 Lakeside Overlook. I'm a parent  
16 of a child at Richard Montgomery High School, who is also a  
17 sports person, and I'd just like to weigh in in support of  
18 most of what Lynn Perry Parker said concerning the extension  
19 of Fleet Street by the conversion of the current walkway  
20 right of way into a street for cars. In my opinion that  
21 current right of way that you can walk on is an asset for  
22 Rockville, and especially for the 2,000 students at Richard  
23 Montgomery. And one good thing that makes it necessary is  
24 that it dissuades cut-throughs through the residential area  
25 in which Richard Montgomery High School is, it's on the edge

1 of a large residential area. And, I mean, I drive around  
2 there all the time, and walk around there all the time, and  
3 I'm pleased to see that Mt. Vernon Place is not used as a  
4 cut-through, because it's not worth it as things are now. If  
5 you come down Wootton Parkway and are going into Rockville  
6 there's too many turns and too many stop signs to make it  
7 worth going Mt. Vernon Place down to Monroe Street and then  
8 into the City. To make that into a road would allow people  
9 to do that much more easily, in fact, to go down Mt. Vernon,  
10 which is another danger that wasn't developed by the previous  
11 speaker, in that local kids cross Mt. Vernon right throughout  
12 it, right down it. Yes, there are some crosswalks; they  
13 don't know, as she said, even if they're not texting and  
14 walking, they're already in their school environment when  
15 they're crossing that street, they're not thinking about  
16 cars, and they don't have to at the moment because it's 25  
17 miles an hour, people are generally very good, and there are  
18 dwelling blocks of flats and things down there, as well,  
19 which discourage people from going through.

20 I support the current difficulty of dropping  
21 someone off at the school. Many, you know, that it has an IB  
22 program which is county wide at Richard Montgomery, which  
23 means that 50, 60 kids, maybe more, must be more, so 30 or 40  
24 in each year come from other places in the County to go to  
25 Richard Montgomery. And so, yes, there is a bus system from

1 their home schools, but also, they need to get dropped off,  
2 and it's a big problem coming out of the parking lot there at  
3 present. If there's more traffic on that road thanks to the  
4 opening of Fleet Street it's going to be hell.

5 CHAIRMAN: Thirty seconds.

6 MR. TOLERTON: Okay. And, right, and this last  
7 thing would be that Rockville Pike is really busy on  
8 weekends, and if that were opened up to traffic, Fleet Street  
9 in front of the school on weekends that would wreak havoc  
10 with school sports that are carried on on the weekends.  
11 Thank you very much.

12 CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Any questions? All right.  
13 Thank you, sir.

14 UNIDENTIFIED STAFF SPEAKER: Could I ask you to  
15 spell your name, please, and provide your address?

16 MR. TOLERTON: Last name Tolerton, T-O-L-E-R-T-O-N,  
17 Alan, A-L-A-N, and the address is four Lakeside Overlook.

18 UNIDENTIFIED STAFF SPEAKER: Thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN: Well, congratulations, Richard  
20 Montgomery High School, I guess you're number one in the  
21 state according to U.S. News and World Report. One of the  
22 top ranked schools in the country. So, well, editorials  
23 aside, is there anyone else who wishes to speak? Yes,  
24 please. Okay, you'll be next. Please state your name and  
25 address for the record.

1 MS. DONOHUE: Okay, my name is Susan Donohue, and I  
2 live at 676 College Parkway in Rockville. And to be honest,  
3 I wasn't planning on talking, but hearing Lynn Perry Parker  
4 talk, and this other gentleman talk, so I'm basically going  
5 to be talking on the same topic, but another observation.  
6 So, I don't know exactly when, maybe a year and a half or two  
7 years ago was when I first became aware of the possibility of  
8 expanding Fleet Street, and so I think there was one of these  
9 e-mails that goes to a bunch of RMPTSA, you know, list sort  
10 of type of thing, and suggested that you write to the  
11 Planning Commission about your thoughts on it, and I did that  
12 back then. And, you know, I'm not a parent that, you know,  
13 is always at Rockville, sorry, Richard Montgomery High  
14 School, and that type of thing, my children take the bus, if  
15 I do go to R.M. I'm not a volunteer usually during the day, I  
16 would be there in the evening, you know, for a meeting. So,  
17 I don't see all this traffic and stuff that the other parents  
18 have talked about. I'm being honest about it. But  
19 coincidentally, at the time when I found out about this  
20 expansion of Fleet Street the children were having, children,  
21 the teens were having their exams, and so, in fact I was  
22 taking lunch breaks or mid-morning breaks from work, I don't  
23 work that far away, to either drop off or pick up, I had one  
24 child there at the time, to either go to school or pick them  
25 up from school from an exam. So, it could have been a

1 various times say during the morning. I guess it was like  
2 either 10:00 a.m. or noon. And, so I was amazed, I knew of  
3 the open lunch policy, but I hadn't seen it firsthand, so as  
4 the others have mentioned, you see the kids walking, and it's  
5 true. But even at other times of the day, like I said with  
6 the exams when maybe if you had traffic on Fleet Street  
7 drivers might know okay, at the time school opens or the time  
8 school ends you're going to have a lot of students walking  
9 along, but the point is you're going to have it other times.  
10 So, I was seeing all these kids, they were usually in groups,  
11 you know, there's not anybody going to lunch by themselves, or  
12 going to have their break, but they were in groups, talking  
13 to each other, yes, some might be on their, you know,  
14 listening to their iPod or talking on the phone, but they're  
15 just talking even, even not using their gadgets, and they're  
16 not paying attention. And I had to pay very close attention  
17 because I knew they weren't looking at me and watching me.  
18 And like I said, this would have been a more odd hour of the  
19 day when they were done with their exams, and this happens a  
20 couple of times a year.

21 I think the bottom line is that --

22 CHAIRMAN: Thirty seconds.

23 MS. DONOHUE: Okay. I guess the bottom line is  
24 there are a lot of activities that go on at the school, and  
25 it's not just going to be at the beginning of the school day,

1 or at the end of the school day, and the kids don't really  
2 pay attention, they're too busy with their friends to notice.  
3 Thank you.

4 CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Any questions? All right.  
5 Sir?

6 MR. WHALEN: Is it two sections, the Code and the  
7 Plan, is that --

8 CHAIRMAN: Right. Yes. Well --

9 MR. WHALEN: I signed up but I didn't --

10 CHAIRMAN: Yes, the Code is --

11 UNIDENTIFIED COMMISSIONER: Later.

12 CHAIRMAN: -- later.

13 MR. WHALEN: All right.

14 CHAIRMAN: We're going to have a whole separate  
15 thing on the Code, so if you have stuff about the Code --

16 MR. WHALEN: I'm going to sign up about the plan.

17 CHAIRMAN: Okay.

18 MR. WHALEN: James Whalen Investment Properties,  
19 Inc., and I'm going to talk about the property at 1010 and  
20 1066 Rockville Pike. And I agree that that was not Mr.  
21 Johnson's best work.

22 What I've passed out is to give you an idea of the  
23 impact at 1010 through 1066 Rockville Pike. This plan is 16  
24 feet more than the previous section we saw, and the current  
25 section would take approximately 52,000 feet of that

1 property, or 44 percent. After the taking the current  
2 improvements would be, would not be usable, so there would be  
3 no residual land -- so while there would be residual land  
4 there would be significant quantifiable damages to the  
5 impairment of the income strain. The property between this  
6 property and Edmonston would have to be condemned in its  
7 entirety. That property which is undeveloped and arguably  
8 one of the most difficult sites on the Pike sold twice in the  
9 last eight years for one and a half million, or \$58 a foot.  
10 So, given the established price I can't see how the City  
11 could pay lower than that price if they were to take the  
12 property.

13 Our property like many others have viable  
14 improvements, would be valued based on the land taken and the  
15 impairment on the existing income strain. Even though the  
16 taking may not actually touch a building, it would impair  
17 access and reduce parking, which by itself could render a  
18 property worthless in its current configuration.

19 If you look at the whole two miles of the 122 feet  
20 of right of way that has to be acquired the City would have  
21 to condemn 1,288,000 square feet of land at \$40 a foot,  
22 that's \$51.5 million, at \$58 a foot it's \$75,000,000. If you  
23 add the damages to the income stream and improvements for  
24 loss of use the number would be exponentially greater than  
25 that.

1           The point of all this is to say is that it's a  
2 fantastically expensive proposition just to acquire the  
3 property. Condemnation for good public use is a good thing,  
4 I'm not here complaining about that, but I want you to look  
5 at the whole picture. Who knows what the entire project will  
6 cost after you acquire the land? So, if we want to  
7 accomplish something the goal should be realistic and  
8 attainable, and more importantly, the positive results must  
9 be measurable and meaningful. Cost containment is large, of  
10 course, is a large contributor to making a project  
11 attainable.

12           In the case of our property as I understand it the  
13 new section will not tie into Edmonston Road, and all the  
14 driveways would come back out to the main right of way before  
15 the intersection, and then go back in after the intersection.  
16 Since the new proposed section terminates before the  
17 intersection anyway, why not terminate it before it reaches  
18 the property, or somewhere further down the line? It seems  
19 to me there's no adverse impact to the plan, and Rockville  
20 would save the cost of condemning nearly 1,000 linear feet of  
21 right of way. There are other examples like this on the Pike  
22 at other intersections and they should be contemplated since  
23 the savings could be enormous and the adverse impact to the  
24 plan minimal.

25           Of course, another thought would be to reduce --



1 CHAIRMAN: Thirty seconds. Yes.

2 MR. WHALEN: The other thought would be to reduce  
3 the width of the proposed section. Now, by the way, I don't  
4 know who actually believes that walking across a road 212  
5 feet wide with six high speed traffic lanes, two rapid  
6 transit lanes, four other traffic lanes for local traffic and  
7 buses, and two bike lanes is going to be a pleasant  
8 experience, and heaven help the poor kids from Richard  
9 Montgomery if they cross that street.

10 The vision is good for the Pike, and a new improved  
11 section could be viable, but we should wait, I think till the  
12 improvements to the north and south are a near reality.

13 CHAIRMAN: Okay.

14 MR. WHALEN: That is when it's practical --

15 CHAIRMAN: Sir, your time.

16 MR. WHALEN: That is when it's practical to plan  
17 and execute a vision for Rockville.

18 On the other hand there are a few projects that  
19 have been on our books for years, like Fleet Street.

20 CHAIRMAN: Sir, time is up. Thank you.

21 MR. WHALEN: I'm for Fleet Street. Thank you.

22 CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Any questions?

23 COMMISSIONER HILL: I do have a question. I just,  
24 I wanted to understand this rendering. We have proposed I  
25 think on the North Pike, on the east side more constrained

1 spacing --

2 MR. WHALEN: Right.

3 COMMISSIONER HILL: -- do you know what was used in  
4 this rendering you gave us?

5 MR. WHALEN: This is that.

6 COMMISSIONER HILL: This is the constrained space?

7 MR. WHALEN: Yes, the constrained, actually, the  
8 constrained section that is in the new plan is actually 16  
9 feet more than the section in the old plan.

10 COMMISSIONER HILL: Okay.

11 MR. WHALEN: And it goes, as you can see it goes  
12 right through 1010, it would demolish that building.

13 UNIDENTIFIED STAFF SPEAKER: Just for  
14 clarification, the old plan was the original draft?

15 MR. WHALEN: The original draft. Yes.

16 CHAIRMAN: Okay. Thank you. Anyone else who  
17 wishes to speak? Going once. Going twice.

18 UNIDENTIFIED COMMISSIONER: On the plan.

19 CHAIRMAN: This is on the plan. Yes, we'll discuss  
20 the zoning subsequently. Going three times. Sold. At this  
21 point I would entertain a motion to continue till --

22 UNIDENTIFIED COMMISSIONER: So moved.

23 COMMISSIONER LEIDERMAN: Second.

24 UNIDENTIFIED COMMISSIONER: Continue until May --

25 CHAIRMAN: Until May 22nd. All right. Any

1 objections? All in favor?

2 (A chorus of ayes was heard.)

3 CHAIRMAN: Any opposed? We are continued till May  
4 22nd, and this concludes the Rockville Pike's Plan draft  
5 section of the evening.

6 (Whereupon, the proceedings were continued until  
7 May 22, 2013.)

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DIGITALLY SIGNED CERTIFICATE

DEPOSITION SERVICES, INC., hereby certifies that the attached pages represent an accurate transcript of the electronic sound recording of the proceedings before the City of Rockville's Planning Board in the matter of:

ROCKVILLE PIKE PLAN

Meeting 08-2013



By: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: May 3, 2013

Paula Underwood, Transcriber